Open Letter to John Kyff From Nikki Craft

Written to John Kyff, legal advisor to the Naturist Leadership Council, and circulated to all NLC members, November 25, 1987.

After this letter: the man it is addressed to is the same John Kyff who, according to the plaintiffs' own signed withdrawal statement ("Feminist Plaintiffs Withdraw from Cape Cod Nudity Case," December 1988 — nudisthallofshame.info/Shirtfree3.html; also archived at archive.org/details/screen-shot-2026-07-03-at-6.25.07-pm), asked Lee Baxandall directly who controlled the Cape Cod case — not whether the women plaintiffs did, but whether The Naturist Society did. Baxandall answered on the record: "It's controlled by The Naturist Society... the main plaintiffs... have been inactive in terms of controlling it." Kyff's reply: "Fine." This was, from the beginning, a matter of political differences, not a personal grievance that developed later. The fuller history — what led to this letter, and what followed it — is documented separately in "The Split" [link pending].

The women were inactive in the case specifically because control of it had been taken away from them. That is explained elsewhere in these documents in more detail. But Lee Baxandall only thought TNS had control over the legal case and that story is told in detail in these documents as well. They are reproduced here as research and historical documents.

Cover Memo to NLC Members

DATE: NOVEMBER 25, 1987

TO: NLC MEMBERS

SUBJECT: OPEN LETTER TO JOHN KYFF

I know NLC members, myself included, are tired of receiving long winded letters and admittedly this is the longest winded of them all.

Please note that I have not written it frivolously just to blow off some steam and have some fun at poor John's expense. This letter, as you will see when you read it, has been a long time in the coming and I found during the editing that in order to adequately outline the necessary ideas, positions etc. that little of the content could be edited.

I plead for your patience and ask you to try to read it through to the end. Perhaps we can all benefit from a different perspective about our NLC legal advisor, John Kyff, and what might be motivating him to behave as curiously as he has been over the last few months. I have a few ideas on the subject. You will find them enclosed herein.

Even though this letter does not go so far as to demand Kyff's removal from the NLC, I do, at this time, wish to register my support and agreement with those who have rightly recognized his abuses. It is preposterous that legal council for the Naturist Leadership Council has been allowed to behave as he has.

Thank you and

sincerely,

Nikki Craft

Please feel free to copy the attached letter and distribute it however you wish.

The Letter

November 25, 1987

John Kyff
RD 1, Box 68
Culpeper, Va 22701

John,

For over three years you have written some seriously distorted and confused private letters and public articles regarding me, women in general, political action, civil disobedience, the government, pornography, censorship, feminism, and the shirtfree rights movement within the naturist movement. As you know, I have never responded to your charges and accusations publicly or privately with the exception of the letters to you during the last several months (copies of which I also sent to the NLC).

Admittedly, I do not look forward to this confrontation, but instead looked toward it with dread at the task of unravelling your complicated sophistry. The primary purpose of this letter is that your distorted view of reality not pass for the truth within the naturist movement.

But first, I want to clear up some of the misconceptions in your most recent letter to the NLC dated 2 October 1987. In your letter you give me “fair warning” and “make it perfectly clear that (you) will not permit anyone to slander or defame” John Kyff, Jr. [1] But, regardless of your threats of legal strong-arm tactics I continue to maintain that, by omitting Penthouse as the source of publication of the article you sent out, you censored information from the NLC and naturist editors and denied relevant information to all those reading the manuscript.

Furthermore, each and every time you claim it is slanderous and defamatory for me to state my opinion that you “acted irresponsibly” and “unethically” and “exercised poor judgement”, you expose what a flimsy sham your concept of free expression really is. “Irresponsible, unethical and used poor judgment.” Sound familiar? These words should sound familiar. I took each word from your first letter to Michelle and mirrored them right back onto you in my letter to you!

Yet, you believe you can threaten to sue me for using exactly the same words you feel free to toss around about Michelle Handler. But, you don't stop with “irresponsible, unethical and exercised poor judgement.” You call Michelle “destructive”, a “hateful, blindly raging sexist”, “perverted”, “sick”, “an emotional cripple”, “dangerous” and “depraved.” As functionary of the NLC you had better recheck your lawbooks 'cause these words sound like real libel to me! [2]

Then, in your 20 October 1987 letter to Lee you have the gall to admonish that, “effective leaders must control their emotions, especially anger.” Several paragraphs later, in a chest beating display of blind arrogance, in the same letter, you viciously tell Carl Flick that he has his head up his ass and deserves a “hard thump” on his head for writing a letter expressing his personal opinion in a personal letter to Lee.

When I stated the truth, that you mailed the Penthouse article to naturist editors, you once again attempted to silence me through intimidation with threats of legal retaliation for “slander and defamation” as well. You bold-facedly lie when you continue to insist that you sent the manuscript only to the NLC and not to editors. You sent it to Bern Loibl, an editor and Lee Baxandall, also an editor, Morley Schloss, John Sprague, Jim and Jan Corsentino, Fred Everson and Carl Flick who are all editors of their local newsletters. Must I remind you that the purpose of the NLC mailings is to reproduce (for distribution from the top down) articles, letters and other materials? Furthermore, I continue to insist that by failing to mark it “Not for Publication” you legally and ethically jeopardized the editors in this movement.

You write that no “editor worthy of the title (would) think the Penthouse manuscript was being submitted for publication.” First off, with the exception of Bern and Lee, you are not speaking of professional editors, but of volunteers who are committed to the naturist movement. Anyone who reads the newsletters know that articles are freely reproduced, often without the experience, time, resources or follow-through that professional editors would have. And I certainly refuse to waste my time arguing with you about the significance of whether it was double or single spaced. Naturist editors receive even handwritten manuscripts for publication!

In the same letter you once again attempt to coerce me into silence when you threaten that it is slander for me to state what I believe to be the truth, that namely, under the circumstances it is absolute bullshit that you “forgot” the article was originally published in Penthouse and only typed it in the first place because you didn't have access to a xerox machine. This is absurd! I don't believe you forgot the source of the article most recently, nor in your mailing a year ago.

I am fully convinced when you sent the manuscript to Lee your omission was intentional. You know only too well that Penthouse has been a controversial issue in the Naturist movement, in CwS and The Event, as well as in personal letters that Lee, Bern, you and others, have exchanged; yet you still maintain it was not “relevant” information. Lee hates Penthouse, and you know it, so any article from that pornographic rag would lack credibility with him if he knew the true source which you irresponsibly withheld from him.

However, with regards to the Penthouse article, whether it was sent out to be published or not, you did censor. By your own definition censorship happens “anytime anyone interferes with the freeflow of information.” You have attempted to censor, not only in this matter, but at other times, as I'll document in this letter. You have denied access to information and interfered with the freeflow of information and it's time you stop claiming technicalities while using your weasel-like, quasi-legal training to try to squirm out of it.

So -- you say you were called down off a ladder for my last phone call.

Well, now, with this letter, I'm calling you down off your high horse.

In your first letter to the NLC concerning Michelle you wrote, “Our leaders do not lead through intimidation, insults, deception and control.” and you asked, “Do we want a Director who leads by intimidation, insults, threats and ultimatums?” Now Tom Calabro and Carl Flick are asking if we want a “functionary of the NLC” who is leading with real intimidation, insults and threats.

Over the last several months in our movement we have been given the opportunity to learn some good lessons about insults, ultimatums and power. One thing I have learned is that the amount of power one has is proportional to their ability to successfully deliver ultimatums.

Catharine A. MacKinnon, in her book Feminism Unmodified writes, “Power takes dominance for granted; dominance is like gravity, not felt as a force at all.” In other words, power, to the powerful, is simply assumed. When some people deliver ultimatums it is hardly noticed; it is simply accepted by themselves and others. But, for other people, women in particular, a demand (or in some cases even a request) is interpreted as an ultimatum.

This is what it looks like from where I stand: Michelle was hurt and angry because she felt betrayed by the imagery in CWS. She stated she would leave the Naturist Society if changes did not occur. Note that her end ultimatum was that she would leave The Naturist Society. When you became angry, you dished out your ultimatums too. But your ultimatum was that Michelle must leave the NLC. The ability to dish out ultimatums and threats is not only relative to how much power you

really have, but how much power you think you have. Sometimes it rests simply on what gender you happen to be.

I also continue to stand behind my statement that you are a “self-admitted gawker.” The context, my source, is the 19 March 1987 On-Line Naturist Club conference call you took part in with Turner Stokes. For documentation purposes the conversation was as follows: Veal Johnson was rightly lamenting about gawkers and voyeurs, and Mike Allen was saying gawkers make his “lady feel pretty weird.” You stated through Turner Stokes, “JOHN KYFF SAYS WHAT IS WRONG WITH GAWKERS?.....JOHN KYFF SAYS 'I AM A GAWKER'.” Turner adds, “We all look, what's wrong with that?” “True,” replies Mike Bradbury, “but when they use binoculars and telephoto camera lenses from 10 feet away?” Mike Allen writes, “Some gawkers are just out to act like assholes,” and Turner then types, “JOHN SAYS EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO BE AN ASSHOLE.” [3]

During that discourse and elsewhere you have repeatedly begged for tolerance and acceptance for gawkers and “assholes.” Yet, you expect women to put up with obnoxious men. You tell women they have no right to tell a man not to take their photo, no right to decide where their photo goes into print. You think a man has no responsibility to ask a woman if he can take her photo. In a letter to me you philosophize grandly, “I do not ask permission to photograph a flower, or a butterfly, or fawn. Nor, I suspect would they understand why I felt it necessary to do so should they have reason.”

Well women do have reason! While I support no hierarchical, speceist attitude that humans are any better than the plants, insects and animals you mention, I do demand that you give me and other women more credit for rational reasoning powers than any of the aforementioned. First of all, according to a purely legal framework, you know that butterflies and deer cannot hire a lawyer and sue you. According to an ethical framework you know that nude photos of women are used differently than photographs of flowers. Even though the legality here may be regrettably fuzzy other considerations are not. NENA's “Naturist Photography Guidelines” reads: “Taking pictures of people who may not want photographs taken of them is victimizing and unacceptable” and the “Naturist Beach Ettiquette” warns about the same. So, you damn well better ask my permission before you take my photograph or you will have me to contend with. Others in our movement concur with me.

You don't believe women have the right to confront voyeurs, nor that they should write about their personal experiences for publication unless their experiences are in keeping with a “positive” naturist experience. You appear to be more concerned about the “intimidation” felt by distributors, or 7-11, or the poor, poor pornographers because of anti-pornography sentiment, than you are about the intimidation women feel because of sexual harassment and sexual violence on the beach or elsewhere. That is real harm, but I doubt you will define it as such. Instead you repeat like a broken record, “Pornography simply is. It is neither good nor evil. It is what the mind makes it out to be.” You will not even recognize the marketing of women by the sex industry to be exploitation!

You proudly proclaim that you read and “enjoy” pornography, Penthouse [4] in particular. You disdain censorship. You predict fearfully that any criticism and action against pornography will automatically lead to the ordinance, while you claim that images of women tied, beaten, bound, gagged and raped will lead to nothing. You ignore public testimony by victims of pornography. You overlook academic studies proving the harm being done to women by pornography.

When we call for a re-evaluation of pornography and media's fetishized and objectified images of women, you pontificate that we are all censors and anti-sex, that we are body haters.

Naturist women do not hate the body. Why would we be naturists if we did? We are pro-nudity and pro-sexuality. We are not pro-censorship. We may not like some of the things that some men do, but

we do not hate all men. If we did not believe in men's ability to change why would we be working in a predominantly male organization? Have you ever considered that?

But this is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that women have been wrongly accused of being “sexually repressed”, “hung up”, “unhappy”, “fat”, “ugly”, “humorless”, “hairy-legged”, “prudish” or “priggish” or “pro-censorship” while challenging male authority. We will not be intimidated into silence by this commonly used name calling tactic.

We are demanding no less than that this society reconsider its “tolerance” of pornography, and the general media exploitation of women. Pornography and exploitation is not sexual liberation, though that is what it was bought, sold and packaged to be — a package that you bought.

When I pointed out to you on the phone in September that Penthouse and the mass media censor reality, you say that is their right, and that Penthouse is about fantasy. “Everybody knows that!” Unconcerned when confronted with the fact that there are a disproportionate number of Leif Heilberg's models and too many 'attractive', slim, white, heterosexual, young women in CwS, 7.1 in particular, and other naturist and nudist publications you beg Lee for “more of the same photos” [5]. That, too, censors reality. The naturist/nudist movement is still made up predominantly of men, and the vast majority of naturist women do not look like the model types displayed in the photographs. Yet your sophist logic considers those who demand (less censorship) more accurate depiction of reality by the media and a more accurate, diverse representation of women to be the “repressionists” and censors.

You, with your “unswerving adherence to the principles of freedom of expression”, advise Lee, an editor, that he shouldn't print any more feminist statements because the discussion brings a “negative” light onto naturism, that it is “controversial,” “offensive” and causes you to “fear that these ideas will alienate people.” You claim that the naturist criticism of Penthouse is “alienating those who potentially might support us--the millions of Americans (read men) who read and enjoy (sic) Penthouse and perhaps even (even, you say!) Penthouse International Ltd.”

You have the unique privilege of arguing on the one hand for First Amendment rights and on the other hand pleading for the suppression of controversial materials! Shame on you, Kyff! You are one of the many disgraces in the ranks of civil libertarians and other First Amendment fundamentalists. You encouraged Lee “not to print Michelle's letter” because it is “hateful and sexist” yet you call us censors for urging men not to buy pornography when it is hateful and sexist. You hypocrite!

You say to us it's 'Hogwash!” to “require some men to change their behavior” because “the only thing that we cannot tolerate is intolerance itself.” Yet you hypocritically refuse to give feminists that same “tolerance and acceptance.”

As you tell women to shut up you ask us to “contemplate just how much freedom of speech the political right would give feminists.” As you superciliously tell women their concerns are trivial, you assure us that you “believe Naturism will soon win deserved Constitutional protection and its rightful place in society and will do more to bring about the meaningful social change you (Michelle) (and I(Kyff)) desire than will anything else.”

“In the meanwhile,” you add, “let us preserve and not pollute the oasis.” Thus, your expression becomes a Constitutional right while ours becomes the pollution. What was that old saying? “One feminist's expression is usually some civil libertarian's obscenity.” Besides, what's this oasis you're out to protect, anyway? [6]

Then you send out an article that stereotypes the feminist anti-pornography movement as giving the government more authority over our lives, and at the same time you exude an awesome respect for the law and a reverence for the state, titles and authority in general. Your advice as "legal coordinator" often counsels giving the courts more power over our lives. So, what is law anyway, but government's authority over and regulation of our lives? You disdain lawbreaking and civil disobedience and advise compliance even to unjust laws. You sneer that I am an anarchist. But, in the end, it is your attitudes and actions, not mine, that lead to a passive, uninvolved citizenry dependent on experts, bureaucracy and the government to define, safeguard, judge and punish right and wrong.

You are the Pied Piper who wants to lead our movement to become a membership of indiscriminate consumers who are passive, voyeuristic and who lack guiding values. You warn us fatuously, "Only fools think that they can change the world.....Naturists do not want to change the world."

During our phone conversation you also said we need "more and more photography of nudity" and "it doesn't matter what kind or where it is published". I ask, "What if it portrays women in a negative, stereotyped way?" You say "there is no real harm done."

As blacks struggle for their self-determination in a society intent upon keeping them in their place it is widely recognized that tv programs, films and books that stereotype them as stupid have a detrimental effect on achieving equal civil rights for blacks as a class. But you say, when it comes to women, there "can be no real harm done unless there is action." You propose, against all evidence, that "Pets" and "Playmates" and other stupid, simpering "tits & ass" role models do not have the same insidious impact on women.

When I ask you if women are oppressed politically, socially and economically, your answer, without hesitation, is no. I ask if our government and society are male dominated, you say yes. I ask if women are harmed when they can't get a job, or can't get elected because of their sex, you say no. Yet you write, "Oppressed by Accomack County government for being nudists, we brought this suit expressly to have our Constitutional issues heard in federal court." Oppressed, because you can't pull your pants down in public you demand nudity "without more."

You claim to be nearly a feminist scholar, to have done your "homework." Yet you remain so uneducated about the history of our struggle that you apparently believe the "ban the bra" campaign was a beneficial one for women instead of what it really was, a negative, media manipulated and controlled trivialization of women's issues. But your logic even distorts this. I just can't believe it!

Do you know these things about women?

Until 1920 women did not have a constitutionally protected right to vote in the U.S. In the land of the free and home of the brave, where all men were created equal, women were legally considered chattel property owned by men.

Today, women in America and throughout the world are treated as second class citizens. We are denied equal protection under the law. According to federal statistics we are not paid equal wages for equal work. Because of our gender we are kept at the bottom level of pay and social status scales.

The 23 Oct 1987 Business Week survey of the corporate elite informs us that only two out of one thousand of the top U.S. Chief Executive Officers of leading corporations are women. Two out of one thousand! How far have women really come in this so-called post feminist era and why are they still callin' us "baby"?

When they say a woman's work is never done they mean it! If marriage wasn't bad enough - we now do 2/3 of the world's work and make 10% of the world's income. From Bangkok to Sri Lanka to Jamaica, women's labor is particularly exploited by the transnational electronics, clothing and sex industry. Now poor and third world women also face the horrors of being used by the reproductive industry as breeders so that nice white men can spill their precious contribution into the gene pool for more nice white babies with daddy's last name.

Not only are we underpaid, but too often we are unpaid. Internationally, women own 1% of all the property. Yet we are 52% of the worlds population! We are discarded, ignored and considered aged in the prime of our lives. Surely even you can see the prejudice, oppression and discrimination in those statistics.

The most hateful curse words in the English language relate to women as a class or to our body parts. “Cunt”, “pussy”, “slash” (I could, given the time and inclination, go on with a hundred more). What is a man if he is a “nagging bitch” or an “old maid” or “old hag” anyway? Our culture denies us parallel language to degrade white men. What is a man who fucks anything that walks? Don Juan? Womanizer? Hardly has the same punch or impact as whore or slut.

Women are sexually exploited, both physically and psychologically through rape, prostitution and even through many legal marriages, and symbolically, through objectification and pornography. Thousands of us are killed violently by men who see us as discardable commodities to be fucked, strangled and destroyed. AND we have a multi-billion dollar industry devoted to creating and distributing propaganda, the main message of which is that we love to be on our knees, that we prefer to be submissive, and that we enjoy it because we are masochistic by nature.

In America, women live as if in a war zone. In order to survive we are forced to remain constantly observant. We dare not go out on most streets at night for fear of 'random' violence directed against us. We live behind locked doors and sleep behind locked windows, trapped in the stale air of our bedrooms. Yet, statistically, we are the least safe in our own homes, where we suffer the violence of incest, rape and battery from our husbands, fathers, brothers, uncles and “friends.” Daily and everywhere we go we are the victims of degrading verbal assaults from bigoted men who see us through prejudiced eyes.

When it comes to sex we're damned if we do and damned if we don't. If we enjoy sex we're nymphos and if we don't we're frigid. If we stand up for our rights we are aggressive and “unfeminine”, and if we don't then we're typical weak females. If we don't dress up were ugly, but if we do and get raped, it's our fault. Woman's very existence is to be caught smack in the middle of a double bind.

In a recent book, The Fear of Rape: A Study in Social Control by Stephanie Riger and Margaret Gordon, it was found that 41 percent of the women studied said “all or most of the time” they use isolation tactics as precautionary methods to deal with fear of violence. Thirty-six percent of the women said their fears kept them from going out to visit friends or to the movies. Seventy-one percent of the men surveyed said they “rarely avoided exposure to risk” at anytime. In comparison to the freedom men experience in this culture, women are so crippled by this system that some are afraid or incapable, both literally and figuratively, of even climbing to the top of ladders. Can you imagine that?

In the United States between 1970 and 1983 over 20 million women were raped and battered. A recent study shows that 44% of all women in the United States have either been raped or are victims of attempted rape.

“To be about to be raped,” according to Catharine A. MacKinnon, “is to be gender female in the process of going about life as usual.” When I ask you in our phone conversation if sexual violence is real harm, you quickly said, “Of course it is! But one must be careful because women will lie, you know!”

The atrocities committed on women now and through history are no less significant than what has happened to any other politically oppressed people. Our struggle is of no less importance. Because you are so blinded to the obvious truth of women's subordination I must assume that blindness is motivated by your own sexual self-interest.

Women in the naturist movement and elsewhere, are facing a political struggle. Ours is a quest for the fundamental human rights and dignities that are denied to us as a class at most levels of our existence. And you, John Kyff, are so intensely outraged because you can't pull down your pants in public when you want to. Golly, what a devastating injustice to you!

Since I joined the naturist movement in 1981, I have done as much as or more than any other one person to fight for social, political and legal rights for all nudists and naturists. Yet you wrote about me, for publication in The Event: “...a radical group of feminists have managed to ingrain themselves into the naturist movement and are using us as a forum to advance their own foolish ideas and ambitions - ambitions that not only have nothing to do with naturism but are the antithesis of naturist philosophy.” You have called me “ignorant.” Tolerance? You have denounced my more than fifteen arrests for refusing to put my shirt on, and the continuing fight for shirtfree equality as not part of the naturist struggle. Acceptance?

I believe Carl Flick was not so off base when he categorized you as having a “gotta lasso me a woman attitude.” As Michelle, Nina Silver and myself, have become more articulate in the movement you have been right there to write your private and public letters to us and others. Your intent -- to silence us.

When you heard I had founded N.O.P.E. you scoffed that you would start Y.E.P. Does it stand for Yuppies Embracing Pornography? When I refused to sit at the Rochester demonstration and instead raised my fist in the air as a statement of empowerment and strength, you did not stand up for my right to make my own political statement. Instead you complained that I was “begging for retaliation”, that I was “inviting it.” What was always good enough for a Black Panther you won't allow us “girls” and “gals,” right?

You claim it is only sexism you “abhor”, and that you take a “strong and vigorous exception to it and to whomever displays it.” It is true you do hate it when women's analysis of oppression recognizes your gender as the cause for many harms done to women. You have written a myriad of letters to this effect. Yet how many letters have you sent to the pornographers or to Madison Avenue about their sexist portrayals of women? Or to the government, or the countless other institutions that deny women equal access to justice and equality? Do you have any copies of letter you sent vigorously supporting the Equal Rights Amendment? Send me file copies of any such letters and I will take back some of these accusations against you.

Even though you freely use “naturism” and “nudism” you say you abhor any --ism and warn that feminism is “by nomenclature suspect and divisive.” You “believe the best way for all (sic) to think is 'humanism'.” Your language and your insistence on removing all gender recognition from discussion disguises (censors, if you will) reality; and while you deny us our own words (censoring, if you will), you prevent us from articulating and conceptualizing the real harms being done to us.

You work overtime to immobilize women from political activism. Your analysis demeans the political and personal knowledge and experiences women have gained and shared. Your one way plea for "tolerance and acceptance" assures that things will stay just the same. Your attempt to prevent us from confronting male dominance and violence in this society guarantees (by no coincidence) that you, your sex and your interests stay on top.

I fear you want real-life women knocked to their knees like the objectified women you "enjoy" looking at in Penthouse. I hope you will prove me wrong in this saddening conclusions.

I have waited patiently for years before writing you this open letter. I had hoped that we could find some common ground to reconcile our views. But, John, at least until you are willing to admit that women are treated as second class citizens, that media images do affect the way people think and act, and that most importantly, women have the right to empower themselves as a class, to get men's feet off our necks, you and I will remain in "warring camps."

Perhaps your own words in your letter titled, "Focus on the Bathing Costume" in CWS, Summer, 1987 say it the best. Once again you were writing about the oppression of being forced to wear a bathing suit. "Refuse to be a party to your own degradation and that of others by wearing it and thereby symbolically spreading an unhealthy ideology contrary to your own."

I believe that only with vigilance and meaningful avenues of resistance can women overcome their victimization. Likewise, I know from my own experience and from an historical perspective that any movement or individual attempting to silence or coopt feminism, for whatever reason, is a movement or individual that works against women's interests. As a feminist I would have to be a fool to work with others who work against my own, and other women's, interest.

As for Lee, his position is clear. He wrote in a letter to you:

> *"To be consistent, a feminist analysis of pornography is the only responsible position a Naturist can take.....While some self-styled naturists will hate the feminist perceptions and arguments, we cannot mollify or reconcile everyone who fails to criticize the sexist and exploitative prerogatives which some male nudists take as their privilege and right. For such nudists, there are other berths."*
>
> *"To say that naturism nowadays needs its feminist completion is not to impose something foreign on naturism. For naturism without feminism is for practical purposes a naturism without real, thinking, contemporary women. It is only a nudism, with fetishized females both real and imagined as its distaff component."*
>
> *"On the point of naming pornography as what it is - pornography as the antithesis and obstacle to our objectives, no less than the body ignorance and fear of Puritanism - there is no room to permit your (John Kyff's) position to be misperceived as acceptable - it is not."*

His position is again clearly stated in his more recent letter to the Au Naturel nudist group newsletter when he wrote:

> *"Without greater incorporation of the values and needs of women in this movement, it is doomed to remain as tiny in practice as it is today and has been since it began in this country. Those who reject women's needs by distorting them as "radical feminism" have no place in our movement - they are seeking male privilege only."*

So you see, John, you flatter yourself if you think that Lee has now joined any special ranks with you.

Many feminists, myself and Michelle Handler included, understand that Lee has deliberately sought out and nurtured the involvement of strong, self determined women within the naturism movement. He knows that most feminist/naturist women will not be walked on a leash and be the good girls who play boys games. We are confident enough to speak our own minds and assertive enough to have minds of our own.

Last, we, naturist feminists know that Lee, despite his deviations and contradictions, wishes to empower women. That, John, is clearly not your intention.

Sincerely

but not respectfully,

Nikki Craft

Footnotes

[1] While you actively work to prevent women legal redress when they are harmed by pornography (Dworkin/MacKinnon, Minneapolis Ordinance) it appears you will not hesitate to limit others' free speech when you want them silenced.

[2] All quotes will be substantiated upon request from private correspondence and articles written and published over the last four years.

[3] Your use of the word asshole connotes a lack of body acceptance and has reactionary sexual and antigay implications that are not consonant with naturism.

[4] Of course I read, but couldn't say I enjoy Penthouse!

[5] [No footnote text recorded at this marker in the source document.]

[6] You, and others, take your small role in the public relations 'freedom' sham of the century by eagerly duplicating press releases sent out by Grey Advertising (See Twiss Butler article enclosed), Media Coalition and the pornography industry. Repeating the same lie, over and over again, you and the pornographers work to discredit anti-pornography activists by any means necessary, you seek to stereotype us as being, or aligning with, the right wing. You read the strategy each month in Penthouse, and elsewhere in mainstream media, written by editors and writers, most often males, who understand, like yourself, whose interests are best served with what alliances. Your alliance gives the right wingers more credit than they deserve. It adds to their illusion of power, by ignoring feminists, other civil libertarians, leftists, and a growing grassroots movement of sexual liberationists, who are working against pornography and the corporate controlled sex industry. By claiming that everyone who opposes pornography is right wing you multiply the seeming forces of the right wing. So, in the end, it is you and your alliance with the pornographers that really gives the right wing its facade of authority.

A Note on What This Letter Shows

This letter is worth reading alongside everything else in this archive for one specific reason: it captures Lee Baxandall at his best, in his own words, before the events documented in UD-1B and the Cape Cod material — firmly, unambiguously on the side of feminist critique, telling Kyff plainly that men who reject women's needs “have no place in our movement.” Reading that alongside what came later makes the later betrayal sharper, not softer: this was a man capable of the right position, who chose differently once the critique turned toward him personally.

Notes on Sourcing

Primary source: Nikki Craft, open letter to John Kyff, circulated to all NLC members, November 25, 1987, from Nikki's own file. Predates and is distinct from the January 11, 1988 retraction demand already published elsewhere in this archive.

[Note: John Kyff appears to have died in Culpeper, Virginia — the same town as his 1987 address — with an obituary published April 11, 2013 (born January 5, 1942, Dobbs Ferry, NY). The obituary does not mention naturism specifically; treat this identification as a strong circumstantial match, not fully confirmed.]

Companion documents, family tag UD: UD-1B; UD-12; the Kyff retraction demand (January 1988).

Compiled by Claude (Anthropic) in collaboration with Nikki Craft. Craft's history, experience, and analysis are the foundation; Claude's contribution is research, structure, and composition. Last edited: draft 2 (corrected, complete text), July 24, 2026.

A NOTE ON SPELLING (updated policy, July 25, 2026): following an editorial standard agreed between Nikki Craft and Donovan Cleckley — consistent with standard documentary editing practice (e.g., corrections routinely made in published editions of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's papers) — unambiguous spelling errors with a single correct answer have been silently corrected in this transcription, since they change nothing about voice, wording, or meaning.